

Message Text

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ACTION PER-03

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 ISO-00 SCA-01 A-01 MMO-04 /018 W

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P 211144Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4502

UNCLAS LAGOS 04657

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: APER, AFSP, AMGT

SUBJ: CONSULAR STAFFING

1. IT HAS BEEN APPARENT FOR SOME TIME THAT AUTHORIZED STRENGTH OF CONSULAR SECTION AT THIS POST IS INADEQUATE. PRESENT AUTHORIZED STRENGTH OF THREE FULL-TIME OFFICERS AND ONE SHARED POSITION (30-131-3010) HAS REMAINED UNCHANGED SINCE 1971, ALTHOUGH 1975 WORKLOAD WAS 270 PERCENT THAT OF 1971 AND WELFARE AND PROTECTION WORK HAS DOUBLED IN VOLUME AND COMPLEXITY. CONSULAR GROWTH PATTERN ESTABLISHED 1970-71 HAS EXCEEDED PREDICTIONS AND LIKELY TO CONTINUE IN FORESEEABLE FUTURE. WE THUS FAR HAVE MADE DO BY DETAILING OFFICERS FROM OTHER SECTIONS AND ADJUSTING SCHEDULES DURING PEAK VISA RUSH PERIODS, BUT WORKLOAD HAS OUTSTRIPPED SUCH EXPEDIENTS.

2. EMBASSY RECOMMENDS ESTABLISHMENT OF VISA UNIT CHIEF POSITION AT 0-4 LEVEL, RECLASSIFICATION OF SECTION CHIEF POSITION (30-03-3010) AT 0-3 LEVEL, AND RETENTION OF POSITIONS 30-025-3010, 30-019-3010 (FULL-TIME) AND 30-131-3010 (SHARED). WE ARE HOPEFUL THAT ASSIGNMENT OF EXPERIENCED OFFICERS AS SECTION CHIEF AND VISA UNIT CHIEF WILL ENABLE US TO HOLD OFFICER STAFF INCREASE TO ONE POSITION.

3. WE DELAYED THIS REQUEST IN EXPECTATION THAT WEST AFRICAN ROVER POSITION WOULD BE BASED IN LAGOS AND MAKE SOME ADDITIONAL CONSULAR OFFICER TIME AVAILABLE TO SECTION. HOWEVER, QUESTION MOOTED BY DEPARTMENTS DECISION TO BASE ROVER IN AF BUREAU. IN ANY CASE, ANOTHER HALF POSITION WOULD NOT HAVE SUFFICED.

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RM REQUEST WOULD APPEAR ESPECIALLY TIMELY NOW IN VIEW PPG EXERCISE

OF REDISTRIBUTING POSITIONS WORLD-WIDE. REQUEST MIGHT ALSO TIE IN TO QUESTION OF IBADAN CONSULATE. DURING MARCH INSPECTION OF MISSION, INSPECTORS INDICATED THEY INTENDED RECOMMEND CLOSING OF IBADAN. IF IBADAN IS CLOSED, LOGICAL STEP WOULD BE TO UPGRADE CONSULER POSITION AND TRANSFER IT TO LAGOS. WHILE CLOSING OF IBADAN WOULD PLACE ADDITIONAL CONSULAR BURDEN ON LAGOS, ECONOMIES OF SCALE WOULD PERMIT US TO MANAGE WITH ONLY ONE NEW POSITION. THIS WOULD BE A VERY TIGHT STAFFING PATTERN WITH NO ROOM FOR GAPS.

5. POST PRESENTLY HAS TWO FULL-TIME CONSULAR OFFICERS ON DUTY: GUSTAFSON AND HERMANN. THEY ARE SPENDING SIXTY TO SEVENTY HOURS AT DESKS AND CANNOT CONTINUE AT THIS PACE INDEFINITELY. CONTINUED OPERATING EFFICNENCY OF SECTION AND HEALTH OF OFFICERS REQUIRES EARLY REPLACEMENT FOR POSITION 30-019-3010, WHICH WAS VACATED BY FSO LYON MARCH 18. IF POSITION IS TO BE FILLED BY OFFICER FROM JUNIOR CLASS NOW IN TRAINING, WE SUGGEST ORIENTATION BE CURTAILED AND THAT OFFICER BE GIVEN INTENSIVE BRIEFINGS BY VISA OFFICE AND SCS AND SENT ON TO POST. WE DISLIKE ADDING TO BURDENS OF PERSONNEL OFFICERS STRUGGLING TO BALANCE NEEDS OF OTHER POSTS AND INTERESTS OF INDIVIDUAL OFFICERS, BUT ARE OBLIGED TO ASK THAT URGENT ATTENTION BE GIVEN TO CONSULAR STAFFING NEEDS AT LAGOS.

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